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INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 0391  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1077

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NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/MARCHESE/HARDING

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/04/2026

TAGS: [PREL](#) [LE](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE MINISTERIAL DEMARCHE DELIVERED

REF: STATE 145279

Classified By: Jeffrey Feltman, Ambassador, per 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) On 9/2, the Ambassador delivered reftel demarche to Ambassador Mohamed Chatah, senior advisor to Lebanese Prime Minister Siniora. Chatah agreed with the points and focused in particular on the part dealing with UNSC membership. Chatah said that he fully understood the negative implications for Lebanon if Venezuela were to be elected to the Security Council. Given Venezuela's currently close relations with Syria, Chatah said, he worried about any needed UNSC action on the special tribunal of international character needed to try suspects in the Rafiq Hariri assassination. At the same time, Chatah claimed that Guatemala is traditionally a problem for Arab League members because of Guatemala's relationship with Israel. Promising to discuss the issue with PM Siniora, Chatah advised against raising the issue with Foreign Minister Salloukh, who will represent Lebanon at the AL ministerial meeting.

¶2. (C) Advised by Chatah that Lebanon in the end is unlikely to break Arab League consensus on UNSC membership, the Ambassador also delivered the UNSC points in reftel to MP Saad Hariri. Hariri, the Ambassador argued, has a personal interest in the special tribunal and other Lebanon-related UNSC action. Thus, Hariri should be very concerned with the Venezuela-Syrian relationship and what that means for Lebanon if Venezuela is elected over Guatemala. Agreeing, Hariri said that he would talk with both Egyptian and Saudi Arabian officials in advance of the Arab League ministerial, in hopes of thwarting what Hariri predicted would be a Syrian push for Venezuelan membership on the UNSC.

FELTMAN